ABSTRACT

Method and system for providing 3-D services and 3-D visual directories in a photorealistic, 3-D virtual environment depicting a real-life entity. The real-life entity depicted in the 3-D virtual environment may be an actual place and/or actual entity that is not limited to a geographic location but may include other environments such as, for example, a subway system, library, a virtual card catalogue, a factory, an underground aqueduct system, an organism (e.g., an internal view of a human body), a cable system, a mechanism (e.g., a motor, a computer, a computer circuit), and a warehouse. A photorealistic, 3-D model is used as a platform for the services provided. These services may include mapping services, browsing services, historical services, educational services, entertainment services, and commercial services, such as advertising.